

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

OCTOBER 21, 2010

**PRESENT:** Joe Vitale, Diane Ripple, Barb Holtz, Faith Holley-Beal, Raquel Mehring, Cheri Sylla, Sarah Matson, James Pearson, Sara Carpenter, Don Harris, Megan Sprager, Alyssa Schroder, Missy Kueht-Becker, Kim Sue Lamster, Maura McMahon, Eve Altizer, Emily Krause

**STAFF PRESENT:** Pete Slesar, Antwayne Robertson

Diane Ripple called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Barb Holtz made a motion, seconded by Raquel Mehring, to approve the minutes of September 16, 2010.

**BOARD LIAISON REPORT**

Joe Vitale reported that Georgia Cameron, Deputy Regional Director for the Southeast Regional office for the Division of Public Health presented to the Board regarding our Public Health Department, which received a good rating. Ben Jones presented on bio-watch, and related that Waukesha County is in a pretty good position as far as a reaction plan. There was a case of Meningococcal Meningitis reported in a 16 year old, who is now recovering well. The C.J.C.C. received a grant for adult drug and alcohol court. Pete Slesar reported that he shared with the Board and Committee results of the last inspection of secure and non-secure facilities. They did very well. The Inspector commended staff on the quality of care. They had several suggestions, but it was a very positive report. Joe added that Mike Sturdevant, Juvenile Center Supervisor, has done a great job over the years.

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S STUDY**

Katie Miller was not in attendance for the presentation on the National Children's Study.

**MEMBER PRESENTATIONS**

Alyssa Schroder from Crossroads explained the Youth & Family Project provides individual and family counseling to middle and high school students in the Waukesha School District. They have teen classes, temporary shelter for teens needing a break, a 24 hour hotline (211 takes over after 10:00 PM). Missy Kueht-Becker asked what the age range is covered in the program. Alyssa answered that there is not a specific range. They do provide some help to 19 year old moms, and as young as 6<sup>th</sup> graders. It's all free and confidential. Pete Slesar asked if it's county wide, and Alyssa answered yes. She shared her business card with the members.

Cheri Sylla talked about CESA #1, Cooperative Educational Service Agency #1. She is the Parent Liaison Coordinator and answers questions parents have about special education. The program covers all of Waukesha County. They also have individual parents acting as resources, district parent liaisons, within the school districts. These parents help others navigate through the special needs programs at their school system. Many school systems have parent liaisons, and a few do not.

Antwayne asked if they participate in public education initiatives; he is working on providing education regarding teen issues, specifically the choking game. CESA #1 does have Paul Priester who works with school districts involved in this type of education.

Eve Altizer asked if advocates go to IEP meetings. Cheri answered they do not, but she helps parents who will attend IEP meetings and advocates for them. Once she finds out what parents concerns are outside the IEP meeting, she figures out where they're at and finds support for them. They have a lot of resources to refer families to. She also coaches parents how to find help within their family circle. In some school districts, the district parent liaison has the ability to go to the IEP meetings, when the director wants them there, but generally, they do not go to IEP meetings. It is a concern that there just isn't enough parents to do that. Maura talked about an attorney she's familiar with that could be a good speaker to educate the parent advocates. Cheri stated they do have a lot of information and documentation to help them, it's a matter of helping them find the correct information and providing trainings. She talked about various training sessions she provides. On occasion, she comes out to talk at Parents Place. Joe Vitale talked about the schools addressing this, and he had never experienced trouble in finding advocates when needed and people who are able to communicate well with the parents. Cheri answered that sometimes teachers use words and language that parents new to this are unfamiliar with, and it becomes intimidating and upsetting to parents. She talked about her experience with her own son, and looking back at the first meeting, she felt overwhelmed, and therefore took every training available to her at the time to help her understand and be an advocate for her son. She explained that teachers and schools need to make sure that parents have a good understanding. Communication is the key. Eve Altizer relayed a recent story about a disabled girl going on to college and the miscommunications between the high school and parents. Pete asked about how to obtain a parent advocate. Cheri stated contact her first and she will determine where the family is at. Her role is to discover what the crux of the problem is and determine if they need mediation or an advocate. As she talks to parents, Cheri finds out what they have already done and how to proceed. Parents call her first and she'll help them decide how to proceed. Sometimes they start at the top, and are referred back to her. She'll help them figure out who they should go to. Often people don't know who the program support people are.

Missy talked about how to encourage families to find support before it becomes a problem. Cheri agreed and stated that they try to connect the families with the parent liaison in the beginning and the school district should provide a packet of information. Missy stated that if parents understand that there is help to answer their questions, it may not become a problem. Cheri has developed a chain of command to give to the families at the beginning of the school year or when a student is new. Cheri stated that it's also helpful to have a friend or family member who knows the family to be in the IEP meeting. Joe talked about his experiences as a principal; some IEPs are routine, but some leave parents feeling overwhelmed and therefore a

supportive friend or family member does provide needed support. Joe explained there is a natural defensiveness when being told their child does not fit in. Maura talked about some of the highly educated families she has had experience with who have the biggest problems with the process. Maura asked who people contact for training if they have gone through this and want to become a parent advocate. Cheri stated they could contact her. She makes sure the school supports the parent and there is a small stipend to parent liaisons.

Cheri stated that the CESA #1 website has many resources, and she will email the order form for resources, which she encourages school districts to purchase for their staff and parents.

Sarah Matson asked if they have anyone who helps parents that have disabilities, some of whom don't have a family support system. Some parents have a second grade or less reading level, how to do they understand the process? Cheri stated that they have been asked to help those such parents, but it doesn't come up much. The school district is relied on to recognize the disability of the parent and lack of family support, and asks for her help in finding resources and getting connected with a parent liaison.

Barb Holtz stated that she has worked with CESA before, but didn't realize that they did this. She asked for a service directory form CESA #1. Cheri stated a lot of people think they only work with educators, not parents. The family work started in 2000. Cheri stated that she can bring a brochure or directory of services for everyone at the next meeting.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

Diane stated this segment is for discussion and planning on how we collaborate and work together, in preparation for the needs presentation. What are our efficiencies?

Missy Kueht-Becker began discussion regarding collaboration and how to avoid duplication of services. B-3 is now looking at it from a different viewpoint regarding collaboration with Catholic Charities, Head Start Program, and other organizations who do home visiting. Some home visits are mandated on a weekly basis and some families have a hard time coordinating various agencies visits on different schedules. In these situations, they look to a primary home visitor who can coordinate all the services and maintain a good relationship with the family.

Joe stated that we have hammered away at prevention and intervention and we have a good handle on that. Joe stated we need to work on communication, and suggested the acronym P.I.C.

Pete Slesar asked Missy how they know when there are other home visitors. She said sometimes it's the discussion with the family or information from the county social worker. Pete stated it seems practical that someone should be the case manager or coordinator. Missy stated that to use Jesús' term, we need a "super coordinator". She stated there are billing issues. They look at what is the biggest or primary need of the family and collaborate from there. Sometimes it's difficult to get the parents to understand. They are trying to bridge parents into the community, as some don't know how to get involved and engage with their children. She talked about some of the B-3 activities they have going on for families.

Pete stated from a funding source point of view, a question is how can we consolidate and have a common record and administration of things. Missy stated joint planning of care is what they're trying to do now. That used to be within B-3, and now they are joint planning with other organizations. Sarah Matson stated some parents like many, many people/agencies being involved. Missy stated that we want to have families understand that coordinating and making one primary contact is best for everyone. Maura talked about how sometimes clients think if they tell one person something, that every other caseworker gets that information, which doesn't always happen. Eve stated that they run into this in teen mental health, and she facilitates meetings with others, develops agendas, and takes the minutes for the record. Joe stated that when this is over, it might come down to that this is not the best thing for the family. Missy stated that we have to be thoughtful of the expertise of various agencies, and she hopes that technology will also be helpful. Eve stated that collaboration can be very powerful for families. With her kids, it is very parent and family driven. Missy added that with the little ones, they try to let the families discover the answers rather than telling them what to do with their child.

Pete stated there are various levels when talking about collaboration. Is it necessary to view as a new case when starting at a different agency? Should clients start with an intake everywhere? Can we free up everyone to focus on using their expertise, and not keep repetitive records? Joe asked who gets B-3 records. Missy answered the records are shared with the county and the physician; also families can agree to share with foster parents, schools, etc. She works mainly with Jesús Mireles' staff. If someone enters through access, than it's Antwayne Robertson. They paper share records with the county. Joe stated we are dealing with privacy issues, but he referred to his experience at Froedert and how every doctor, including his primary physician has access to his record. Raquel Mehring talked about secure records they share. There was discussion about secure email. Joe stated that maybe Jesús, Antwayne and Pete can consider CASFAC as the county plans future security measures for emailing records. Pete talked about agencies having different security systems in place and that there is a cost involved in making the systems compatible. Pete suggested starting with a list of everyone's secure mail systems, and presenting it to IT to determine what systems can be compatible. Joe stated another complication is that the State is becoming a silo. Pete stated each division has contracts with agencies and attempts to make important record information available, consistent with the law and confidentiality limitations. We need to look at how we can be most efficient. Electronic data is becoming a bigger and bigger issue. Ultimately, we should look at how we can share information electronically with those agencies we are collaborating with. Joe asked if we could have an IT person meet with us. Antwayne suggested Ann Christman. Antwayne added that he'd like to go beyond emailing, and look at combining records. Missy explained how she understands that the B-3 files are on an X drive, and could the county have limited authorization and access to share those files. Diane Ripple suggested trying to arrange to have Ann Christman meet with us in November and CAFSAC to bring the information on their systems to the meeting. We'll ask about secure email and sharing records.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Joe Vitale asked if we're getting closer updating our list of members, and Diane replied that it's being addressed.

Joe asked Faith Holley-Beal about the financial health of the Big Yellow House. Faith answered there are some struggles in this economy, as everyone is struggling. There are things they're working toward to keep it going.

Diane mentioned that back in June, she and Missy were at a County Board meeting and they talked about CAFSAC and the return on investments. She suggested that people continue to present to the County Board, and the next Board meeting is October 26<sup>th</sup>. They allow three minutes to speak.

Meghan Sprager advised that La Casa is holding a bi-lingual flu clinic on October 26<sup>th</sup> and will email flyers.

Barb Holtz talked about the born learning trail at Hyer Park. It's a wonderful children's play area with nine permanent signs stating three fun things to do with kids. They're hoping to build three to ten of these around the county. They also have a portable trail. A new trail will be part of the revamping of Frame Park in 2012.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on November 18, 2010 at 8:30 in the Boardroom of the Human Services Center.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Joe Vitale motioned to adjourn, and Missy Kueht-Becker seconded the motion at 10:00 a.m..

Approved on 11-18-10  
Date